



## **5-Year Plan (2011 to 2016)**

# **Underwood Conservation District**

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### **Organization of the Underwood Conservation District**

The Conservation District is a political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

The Underwood Conservation District comprises all of Skamania County, plus Klickitat County west of the Klickitat River, except for the town of Stevenson, and most of Bingen. The District was formed in 1940, on Underwood Mountain (hence the name) and has since grown to serve landowners in both counties.

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### **Function of the Underwood Conservation District**

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of local land managers regarding conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

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### **Who We Serve & Why**

We serve landowners and occupiers in particular, but also the general public as a form of natural resource stewardship-in-commons (e.g, water quality improvements serve the public in general). We provide and coordinate resources in order to help improve management and conservation of natural resources.

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### **Mission of the Underwood Conservation District**

The mission of the Underwood Conservation District is to enhance natural resources and stewardship in Skamania County and western Klickitat County.

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### **Vision of the Underwood Conservation District**

*“The goal of the Underwood Conservation District continues to entail helping all landowners within our region – whether private, state or federal – meet their land management goals in careful consideration of our region’s common property resources. Common property resources are those components of the earth, such as our air, water, vegetation, soil and wildlife, upon which we are dependent. We believe that without working in concert with these natural features...without good stewardship...a healthy and happy economic future will be impossible. The Underwood Conservation District’s approaches are entirely voluntary and rely upon the cooperation of natural resource agencies, citizens, industry and interest groups.”*

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### **Values of the Underwood Conservation District**

- ❖ Conservation of natural resources
- ❖ Promotion of wise stewardship
- ❖ Retention and promotion of working farm and forest land
- ❖ Education of the public on natural resource issues
- ❖ Tolerance of diverse land use practices
- ❖ Openness to work with all landowners
- ❖ Neutrality
- ❖ Non-regulatory approach to natural resource issues
- ❖ Voluntary participation
- ❖ Worthiness of landowner trust
- ❖ Honesty and integrity
- ❖ Fiduciary responsibility

### **Natural Resource Priorities, Measures of Success and Goals (in priority order):**

- ❖ Through 2016, coordinate with other agencies to empower and create Firewise communities.
  - ❖ Through 2016, assist forestland owners in forest management plans, technical plans, implement those plans through district cost share agreements as well as state and federal grants/costshare.
  - ❖ Through 2016, assist farmers and ranchers with farm plans, nutrient management plans, costshare and grant applications, and technical assistance on site specific projects.
  - ❖ Through 2016, assist irrigation districts, ditch companies, and Coordinated Resource Management Areas through facilitation and acting to sponsor projects.
  - ❖ Through 2016, conduct active outreach to orchardists and vineyard operators to identify needs and how we can be of assistance.
  - ❖ By 2016, identify and complete 5 pollinator or wildlife habitat enhancement projects.
  - ❖ Through 2016, assist water users in the district with water conservation practices.
  - ❖ Through 2016, assess additional needs of district landowners, research solutions and implement.
  - ❖ Through 2016, continue to establish and improve riparian buffers.
  - ❖ Through 2016, maintain invasive species control by working with County and state natural resource agencies and local landowners.
  - ❖ Through 2016, maintain and improve a prioritized list of projects that support watershed health. Review this list annually.
  - ❖ Through 2016, in coordination with others, implement ways to fill data gaps identified in watershed plans to assess conditions of natural resources.
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### **Critical Geographic Areas**

The entire district: all of Skamania County and Klickitat County west of the Klickitat River.

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### **Information & Education Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals (in priority order):**

- ❖ Through 2016, educate the district's school students on natural resource issues, and promote the Envirothon program.
  - ❖ Through 2016, provide forestry, livestock, and horticulture and water conservation training on an annual basis.
  - ❖ Through 2016, provide educational opportunities to small parcel landowners and occupiers on natural resource stewardship.
  - ❖ Through 2016, provide education and outreach to local land occupiers to reduce water consumption and solid waste..
  - ❖ Through 2016, increase education and outreach to Latino population.
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### **District Operations Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals (in priority order):**

- ❖ By 2016, have all needed staffing and staff training to implement the Long Range Plan.
  - ❖ Through 2016, pursue funding and practice fiscal prudence to retain staff and provide district services into the future.
  - ❖ Through 2016, establish and maintain positive solid relationships with Klickitat County and Skamania County.
  - ❖ By 2016, have all facilities, vehicles, equipment to meet the needs of the district.
  - ❖ Through 2016, work with neighboring districts and other entities to share resources and information.
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### **Trends Impacting Conservation in the Underwood Conservation District**

- ❖ Changing demographics
- ❖ Smaller parcel size
- ❖ Water rights challenges and energy needs
- ❖ Increase in invasive species

- ❖ Increase in rural and urban wildfire hazard
  - ❖ Climatic changes
  - ❖ Funding challenges
  - ❖ Financial struggles among other partnering governmental agencies
  - ❖ Increase in use of information technology
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### **Strategies, Services & Products to Address Trends**

- ❖ Focus more effort on small landowners in technical assistance and education activities, to address changing demographics and smaller parcel size.
  - ❖ Provide information on ways residents can reduce impact of human activities on global warming.
  - ❖ Gather and provide to the public data on local signs of climate change, such as trends in precipitation and stream flow levels and times of year, mean seasonal water and air temperature, types of vegetation in the area, etc.
  - ❖ Work with other agencies and landowners to encourage land management activities that minimize loss of property from wildfires, and encourage landowners to use drought-resistant trees and shrubs in plantings.
  - ❖ Explore implementation of an Assessment with Klickitat and Skamania Counties and activities that the Conservation District can use the assessment to provide each county (e.g. education and assistance on failing septic systems.)
  - ❖ Reconsider Conservation District boundaries and workloads.
  - ❖ Work with landowners, NRCS and irrigation groups to increase water use efficiency.
  - ❖ Actively cooperate with County Weed Boards to help control invasive species
  - ❖ Increase the use of information technology for information dissemination (the web), and for information collection, storage, and retrieval (GPS and linked databases).
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### **Natural Resource Data:**

- *UCD is a large district (1,395,819 acres total in the district, or 2,181 square miles) comprised of a variety of land uses and geographic features. The district straddles the Cascade Mtns. and extends from the north banks of the Columbia River to Mt. St. Helens and part of Mt. Adams. The district includes moist westside forests and dry eastside shrub steppe environments. Several large river systems are inside the district boundaries, including the Columbia River, the White Salmon River, the Little White Salmon River, the Wind River, parts of the Washougal River, and the Klickitat River. Land uses include forestry, livestock, fruit orchards and vineyards, hayland, and some dairies. The major centers of population are the towns of Stevenson, White Salmon, North Bonneville, Carson, and Trout Lake, to name a few.*
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### **Staffing Needs**

In order to carry out our plan, we estimate the need for:

- ❖ A District Manager
  - ❖ A District Financial Administrator and/or Grant Writer
  - ❖ Two District Natural Resource Technicians
  - ❖ An Education/Outreach Coordinator
  - ❖ A Firewise Coordinator
  - ❖ A Forester
  - ❖ A Conservation Planner
  - ❖ 2-4 volunteer positions
  - ❖ A shared cluster engineer (including experience with dairies)
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### **Annual Budget Needs**

In order to carry out this Long Range Plan, we estimate a total need of at least \$550,000 per year.

- ❖ \$400,000 wages
- ❖ \$100,000 operations and overhead, equipment
- ❖ \$50,000 for cost-share programs and grant match

- ❖ additional funds for specific projects

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## Key Decision Makers

- ❖ UCD Board of Supervisors
- ❖ Local Stakeholders (including, but not limited to :White Salmon River Watershed Management Committee, Wind River Watershed Council, Jewett Creek Streamkeepers, Skamania County Firewise Local Coordinating Group)
- ❖ Skamania and Klickitat County Commissioners
- ❖ State Representatives and Senator
- ❖ Local U.S. Representatives and Senators
- ❖ Washington Conservation Commission

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## Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:

- *Through 2016, coordinate with other agencies to empower and create Firewise communities.*
- *Through 2016, assist forestland owners in forest management plans, technical plans, implement those plans through district cost share agreements as well as state and federal grants/costshare.*
- *Through 2016, assist farmers and ranchers with farm plans, nutrient management plans, costshare and grant applications, and technical assistance on site specific projects.*
- *Through 2016, assist irrigation districts, ditch companies, and Coordinated Resource Management Areas through facilitation and acting to sponsor projects.*
- *Through 2016, conduct active outreach to orchardists and vineyard operators to identify needs and how we can be of assistance.*
- *By 2016, identify and complete 5 pollinator or wildlife habitat enhancement projects.*
- *Through 2016, assist water users in the district with water conservation practices.*
- *Through 2016, assess additional needs of district landowners, research solutions and implement.*
- *Through 2016, continue to establish and improve riparian buffers.*
- *Through 2016, maintain invasive species control by working with County and state natural resource agencies and local landowners.*
- *Through 2016, maintain and improve a prioritized list of projects that supports watershed health. Review this list annually.*
- *Through 2016, in coordination with others, implement ways to fill data gaps identified in watershed plans.*
- *Through 2016, educate the district's school students on natural resource issues, and promote the Envirothon program.*
- *Through 2016, provide forestry, livestock, and horticulture and water conservation training on an annual basis.*
- *Through 2016, provide educational opportunities to small parcel landowners and occupiers on natural resource stewardship.*
- *Through 2016, provide education and outreach to local land occupiers to reduce water consumption and solid waste.*
- *Through 2016, increase education and outreach to Latino population.*
- *By 2016, have all needed staffing and staff training to implement the Long Range Plan.*
- *Through 2016, pursue funding and practice fiscal prudence to retain staff and provide district services into the future.*
- *Through 2016, establish and maintain positive solid relationships with Klickitat County and Skamania County.*
- *By 2016, have all facilities, vehicles, equipment to meet the needs of the district.*
- *Through 2016, work with neighboring districts and other entities to share resources and information.*

## Priority Actions – 12 Months

Activities for FY2011	Target Dates
<i>Pursue successful implementation of Firewise Program by assisting with CWPP development, landowner education and assisting with fire hazard reduction.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Identify, design, provide technical assistance, and procure funding for new forest land improvement projects, livestock management projects, and riparian buffer projects with cooperating landowners.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue to work with irrigation groups to identify, pursue funding for, and implement irrigation improvement projects.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Assess needs and gain public input on how we can assist landowners, especially orchardists and vineyard owners.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue to implement steelhead habitat enhancement/restoration work in Wind River, via BPA contract.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Pursue successful completion of projects such as Indian Creek Culverts Replacement, Betton-Grilley Culvert Removal, Gilmer Creek Water Quality Improvement, Schmid Livestock Cost-Share Project, Buck Creek Irrigation Improvement, Trout Lake Irrigation Improvement, and Cannavina Road Culverts Replacement.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Complete Design, Permitting, and prepare for 2012 Construction on Little Wind River Community Habitat Enhancement project.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Improve constituency survey, distribute, and compile data to assess natural resource needs and ways UCD can fulfill those needs.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue work with the WSWMC and WRWC to develop a WS and WR Watershed Enhancement Project List and Work Plan.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Initiate and maintain a Watershed Enhancement Project List outside of the Wind River and White Salmon River watersheds.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Build a water quality geodatabase for the district.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue to participate in WRIA 29A &amp; 29B planning processes when possible, and as data gaps are identified and prioritized, assist in securing funding and gathering data; participate in WRIA 28 &amp; 30 planning efforts where possible as well.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Pursue successful implementation of Firewise Program by assisting with CWPP development, landowner education and assisting with fire hazard reduction.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Identify, design, provide technical assistance, and procure funding for new forest land improvement projects, livestock management projects, and riparian buffer projects with cooperating landowners.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue to work with irrigation groups to identify, pursue funding for, and implement irrigation improvement projects.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Assess needs and gain public input on how we can assist landowners, especially orchardists and vineyard owners.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Continue to implement steelhead habitat enhancement/restoration work in Wind River, via BPA contract.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Pursue successful completion of projects such as Indian Creek Culverts Replacement, Betton-Grilley Culvert Removal, Gilmer Creek Water Quality Improvement, Schmid Livestock Cost-Share Project, Buck Creek Irrigation Improvement, Trout Lake Irrigation Improvement, and Cannavina Road Culverts Replacement.</i>	July 2011-June 2012
<i>Complete Design, Permitting, and prepare for 2012 Construction on Little Wind River Community Habitat Enhancement project.</i>	July 2011-June 2012

<b>Improve constituency survey, distribute, and compile data to assess natural resource needs and ways UCD can fulfill those needs.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Continue work with the WSWMC and WRWC to develop a WS and WR Watershed Enhancement Project List and Work Plan.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Initiate and maintain a Watershed Enhancement Project List outside of the Wind River and White Salmon River watersheds.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Build a water quality geodatabase for the district.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Continue to participate in WRIA 29A &amp; 29B planning processes when possible, and as data gaps are identified and prioritized, assist in securing funding and gathering data; participate in WRIA 28 &amp; 30 planning efforts where possible as well.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Continue partnering with USFWS, MCFEG, YN, other partners, and school districts to educate students on natural resource issues, including WaterJam, the Envirothon, and pursuing funding for an education/outreach position.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Pursue funding for and provide educational opportunities and technical assistance for livestock, forest, horticulture, and natural resource management.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Continue participating in Coordinated Resource Management Planning groups.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Conduct an annual native plant and noxious weed identification tour in partnership with Klickitat and Skamania Counties.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Integrate outreach and education about aquatic and terrestrial invasive species into general UCD educational materials, as well as continued participation in the Columbia Gorge Weed Management Area meetings.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Add Landowner Handbook to UCD website and send electronically to both counties for posting or distribution.</b>	July 2011- June 2012
<b>Investigate and pursue opportunities to provide natural resources services to Latino populations</b>	July 2011 – June 2012
<b>Keep UCD staff grants/time-tracking up-to-date and work to balance staff workload, including identification of additional staffing, staff training, or funding needs.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Raise awareness of UCD projects and services by requesting to meet with Skamania and Klickitat County Commissioners on a regular basis, identifying ways to meet county needs, and compiling landowner/stakeholder letters of support.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Survey office, vehicle, and equipment needs, and look for ways to make improvements.</b>	July 2011-June 2012
<b>Provide supervisor and staff training and equipment improvements/upgrades as needed to sustain capable staff and work environment.</b>	July 2011- June 2012
<b>Regularly update the board of supervisors with budget picture and potential changes.</b>	July 2011 – June 2012

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices.

## Addendum

### Strategies & Actions to Address Goals (Statements of Intent)

**Goal: Through 2016, assist forestland owners in forest management plans, technical plans, implement those plans through district cost share agreements as well as state and federal grants/cost share.**

*Strategies:* identify forestland owners in need of assistance

*Strategies:* prioritize work based on landowner willingness, impact on natural resources and available funding

Action: secure funding

Action: implementation

Action: monitoring

**Goal: Through 2016, assist farmers and ranchers with farm plans, nutrient management plans, costshare and grant applications, and technical assistance on site specific projects.**

*Strategies:* identify farmers and ranchers in need of assistance

*Strategies:* prioritize work based on landowner willingness, impact on natural resources and available funding

Action: secure funding

Action: implementation

Action: monitoring

**Goal: Through 2016, assist irrigation districts, ditch companies, and Coordinated Resource Management Areas through facilitation and acting to sponsor projects.**

*Strategies:* identify irrigators and other land managers in need of assistance

*Strategies:* prioritize work based on landowner willingness, impact on natural resources and available funding

Action: secure funding

Action: implementation

Action: monitoring

**Goal: Through 2016, conduct active outreach to orchardists and vineyard operators to identify needs and how we can be of assistance.**

*Strategies:* identify orchard and vineyard operators in need of assistance

*Strategies:* prioritize work based on landowner willingness, impact on natural resources and available funding

Action: identify and reach out to orchard and vineyard interest groups or trade associations

Action: assess needs and develop ways to assist

Action: secure funding

Action: implementation

Action: monitoring

**Goal: By 2016, identify and complete 5 pollinator or wildlife habitat enhancement projects.**

*Strategies:* identify insufficient wildlife habitat areas

<p><i>Strategies:</i> prioritize based on landowner willingness, impact on habitat and available funding</p> <p>Action: devise a prescription for treatment of these areas</p> <p>Action: secure funding</p> <p>Action: implementation</p> <p>Action: monitoring</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, Maintain invasive species control by working with County and state natural resource agencies and local landowners</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> establish formal dialogue with weed board and other agencies</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> explore control methods for scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, knotweed, knapweed and other invasive species</p> <p>Action: participate in Columbia Gorge Coordinated Weed Management Area</p> <p>Action: secure funding</p> <p>Action: conduct annual tour for invasive species identification education</p> <p>Action: implementation</p> <p>Action: monitoring</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, maintain and improve a prioritized list of projects that support watershed health.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> review Wind River project list and revise if necessary</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> review White Salmon River project list and revise if necessary</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> establish system for project identification and prioritization in other watersheds</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> start implementation of projects using these prioritized lists</p> <p>Action: coordinate with White Salmon WMC on a White Salmon project priority list.</p> <p>Action: coordinate with WRWC on a Wind River project priority list</p> <p>Action: establish system for project identification and prioritization in other watersheds</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, assist water users in the district with water conservation practices.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> Coordinate with WSCC, DOE, master gardeners and other partners to develop water conservation programs</p> <p>Action: conduct outreach and education</p> <p>Action: secure funding</p> <p>Action: implement projects and monitor</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, coordinate with other agencies to empower and create Firewise communities.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> Implement Firewise program for district</p> <p>Action: assist with updating CWPPs with communities, as needed</p> <p>Action: conduct firewise education and outreach</p> <p>Action: pursue and provide funding for fuels reduction and defensible space projects</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, continue to establish and improve riparian buffers.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> identify insufficiently buffered areas of stream</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> prioritize based on landowner willingness, impact on water quality and salmonid</p>

<p>habitat and available funding</p> <p>Action: devise a prescription for treatment of these areas</p> <p>Action: secure funding</p> <p>Action: implementation</p> <p>Action: monitoring</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, assess additional needs of district landowners, research solutions and implement.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> improve survey of landowners</p> <p>Action: distribute survey</p> <p>Action: analyze feedback</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, in coordination with others, implement ways to fill data gaps identified in watershed plans.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> participate in WRIA 29A &amp; 29B planning processes</p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> participate in other data compilation and sharing processes</p> <p>Action: identify data gaps and secure funding for data gathering</p> <p>Action: begin data collection on stream flows and aquifers and recharge zones</p> <p>Action: begin data analysis</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, provide education and outreach to local land occupiers to reduce water consumption and solid waste.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> coordinate with other agencies to develop program</p> <p>Action: pursue funding sources from water and solid waste entities</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, educate the district's school students on natural resource issues, and promote the Envirothon program.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> coordinate with other agencies to develop education program</p> <p>Action: secure funding for an education outreach position</p> <p>Action: continue education activities with district schools</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, provide educational opportunities to small parcel landowners and occupiers on natural resource stewardship.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> tailor outreach to the needs of small parcel landowners and interest groups</p> <p>Action: identify and contact stakeholder groups to assess needs</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, provide forestry, livestock, and horticulture and water conservation training on an annual basis.</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> Assess forestry, livestock, and other needs among landowners</p> <p>Action: Identify and contact forestry, livestock, horticulture, and water use interest groups</p>
<p><b>Goal: Through 2016, increase education and outreach to Latino population</b></p> <p><i>Strategies:</i> Reach out to Latino population where possible.</p>

Action: Utilize in-house and volunteer resources to translate outreach material into Spanish  
Action: Provide bilingual educational opportunities and advertise to Latino populations

**Goal: By 2016, have all needed staffing to implement the Long Range Plan**

*Strategies:* Define staffing needs

Action: Utilize the work load analysis form  
Action: Identify additional work load and funding needs

**Goal: Through 2016, pursue funding and practice fiscal prudence to retain staff and provide district services into the future.**

*Strategies:* Define funding needs

Action: Utilize budget planning systems and apply for grants as needed  
Action: Keep Supervisors up to date on budget status and funding needs

**Goal: Through 2016, establish and maintain positive solid relationships with Klickitat and Skamania Counties.**

*Strategies:* Raise awareness of UCD projects in Klickitat and Skamania County

Action: Request a meeting with the county commissioners to be held on a regular basis.  
Action: Request landowner and stakeholder group letters of support

**Goal: By 2016, have all facilities, vehicles, equipment to meet the needs of the district.**

*Strategies:* Define the needs of the district.

Action: Survey office needs.  
Action: Look for potential relocation opportunities.

**Goal: Through 2016, work with neighboring districts and other entities to share resources and information.**

*Strategies:* Reach out to partners and share resources.

Action: Inventory relevant resources of other districts and partners and establish MOUs to share resources.